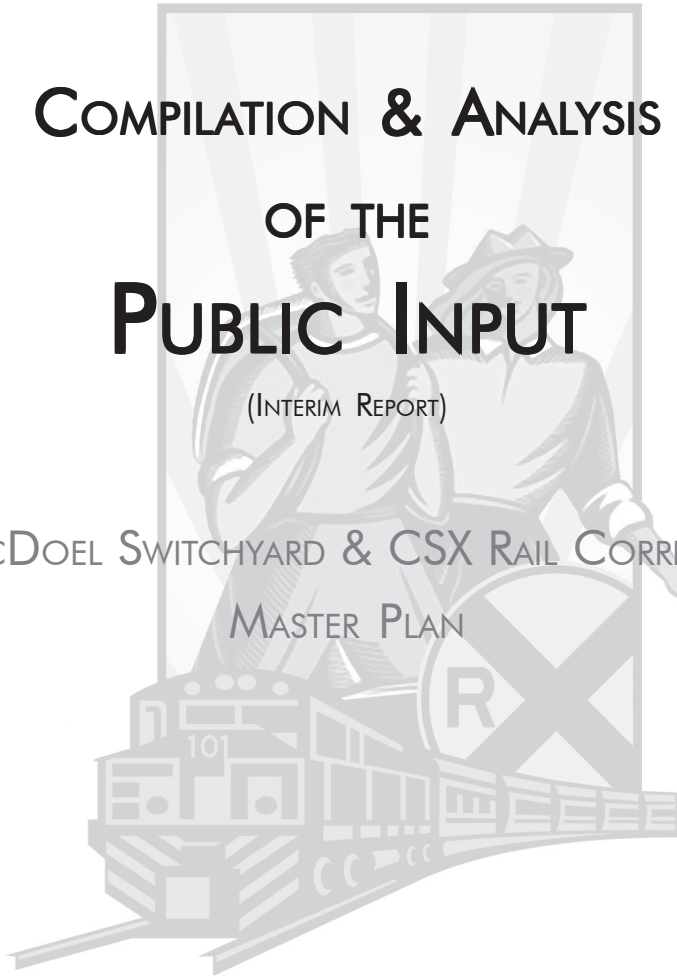


# COMPILATION & ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC INPUT

(INTERIM REPORT)

McDOEL SWITCHYARD & CSX RAIL CORRIDOR  
MASTER PLAN



## PREPARED FOR:

*The City of  
Bloomington  
Redevelopment  
Commission*

*The City of  
Bloomington  
Parks & Recreation  
Department*

## PREPARED BY:



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# INTRODUCTION

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The redevelopment of the McDoel Switchyard & CSX Rail Corridor holds the potential of significantly impacting the quality of life for the entire Bloomington community. Therefore, it is important that a comprehensive program of public input become the central component of the Master Plan development process. Mayor Fernandez, whose leadership has allowed the Community this opportunity to dream, has deemed it essential to allow the people of Bloomington the opportunity to express their hopes as well as concerns about issues such as community connectivity, environmental remediation, infill housing, historic preservation, the preservation of natural resources, the provision of recreational facilities, stormwater management and the enhancement of the road system.

The public input process has been tailored to provide the community with multiple avenues of participation at many points in the process. Extending well beyond the conventional venues for public input, such as council and commission hearings, the development of the Master Plan has sought input in a wide array of venues.

A key and hopefully long term input venue is the Citizens Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is a group of approximately 25 citizen representatives of the community stakeholders for this project. The Committee has and will meet regularly with City of Bloomington and consultant staff to ensure the city staff and consultants are hearing the desires of the Community as well functioning as an initial sounding board for preliminary planning and design initiatives. The timing of the beginning of these meetings were such that the Committee has been engaged from the initial efforts of defining project goals, objectives and program elements.

Two public open houses are intended to allow the public to interface directly with the city and consultant staffs. An initial open house, held on September 11, 2003, was extensively advertised and structured to allow for two separate sessions over the course of the day. A wide array of information and activities were provided for participants, resulting in an impressive amount of comments and input. The intent of the first open house was to solicit input on pre-design questions such as appropriate programmatic elements and identification of issues to be addressed. A second public open house is scheduled to be held after the consultants, city staff and steering committee members have arrived at preliminary planning and design solutions for the redevelopment of the corridor and switchyard.

Approximately 15 key stakeholders (both individuals and groups) were also interviewed privately by City and consultant staff. These stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide direct, detailed input about pre-design issues and opportunities.

An informational and comment soliciting web site has been established by the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department. Citizens are able to access a wide array of information via the web site as well as e-mail comments to the designated city staff.

Overall, the public input process has been tailored to ensure an inclusive approach to the planning process resulting in a Master Plan which truly represents the interests of the citizens of Bloomington. The following summary will serve as a guidebook for decision-makers as the Master Plan development process unfolds.



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## DERIVED PLANNING & DESIGN DIRECTION

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While it is important to achieve an understanding of all of the public's comments, it is possible and advantageous to draw some general and broadly supported conclusions based on that information. The following is a list of key planning and design directions that can be derived from the public input. These key directions should be used as guidelines for the completion of a Master Plan that reflects the vision of the community. These general conclusions will be especially helpful when it becomes necessary to make decisions about competing or conflicting interests.

- Alternative transportation and recreational trail links between the southwestern, western and northwestern neighborhoods and the central business district should be established.
- Alternative transportation and recreational trail links between the redeveloped CSX and switchyard corridor and adjacent public and commercial destinations should be established.
- Alternative transportation and recreational trail links between the CSX Corridor and existing and planned alternative transportation and recreational trails such as Clear Creek should be established.
- Alternative transportation and recreational trail links from the CSX Corridor near Adams to the commercial areas along State Road 37 should be established.
- Crossings of the trail and streets need to provide a high level of safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, potentially including signalized or grade separated crossings.
- Opportunities to join efforts with the County on the development of alternative transportation and recreational trails should be explored. This should include the county owned land south of Country Club Road.
- The Clear Creek stream corridor should be rehabilitated in conjunction with the restoration of the floodplain. This could require additional acquisition of adjacent properties to gain control of the creek corridor.
- Opportunities to use "green" infrastructure and building practices should be sought throughout the project. This may include the removal of marginal existing natural resources in favor of significant long term gains in ecological quality.
- Owners of properties adjacent to the trail and switchyard should be encouraged to redevelop their facilities. The existing properties tend to be either commercial or residential which turn their back to the rail or rail oriented industrial. Appropriate re-uses for these properties would include trail oriented residential and neighborhood-serving commercial in areas outside of downtown and trail oriented residential and a broad array of commercial in the downtown.
- Personal/property safety and security along the trail route must be addressed, including consideration of appropriate lighting, emergency phones, bicycle police patrols, and other measures.
- Passive recreational spaces within the switchyard are highly favored. Active recreation was not rejected but simply a lower priority.
- Historic themes and structures should be acknowledged and reflected in the design of facilities within the switchyard and corridor.
- A moderate level of caution was offered regarding the need to be efficient with the expenditure of local tax dollars.



# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

On September 11, 2003, the City of Bloomington hosted a public open house for the McDoel Switchyard & CSX Rail Corridor Master Plan. The open house took place in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Two sessions were held, the first from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and the second from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. This was done to provide some flexibility and convenience to Bloomington citizens and stakeholders who were interested in the project.



*A wide variety of materials were displayed at the open house.*

The open house was designed to provide some basic project information to interested citizens, and to gather as much input from the public as possible about what they envisioned for the reuse of the switchyard and rail corridor. Provided at the open house were: a large-format aerial photo of the project area, several maps of analytical data, photos and information about similar projects in other communities, a list of potential uses/facilities that could be considered for the project, and an overview of the project purpose and process. Several staff members from the City of Bloomington as well as the consultant team were available for questions and assistance.

Citizens were given a number of methods of providing input on the project. Comments could be made to staff members, who then recorded them. Several blank, large-format pads of paper were made available for people to mark on. Smaller format comment sheets were also made available. People were also encouraged to write comments and notes on any of the large maps or displays. Each attendee was given a sheet of stickers that they could place next to any element on the displays that they supported. Finally, contact information was provided so that people could submit further thoughts at a later time.



*Citizens discuss their concerns as they study the aerial photography of the project site.*

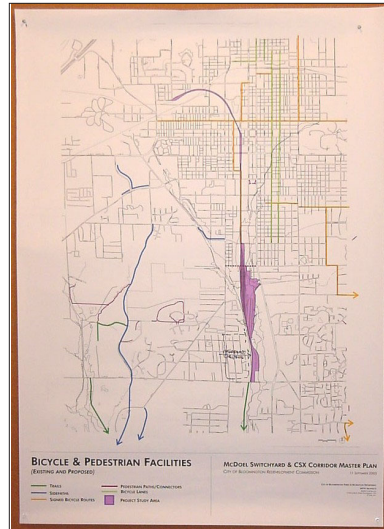
Over the course of the two September 11 open house sessions, well over one hundred interested people participated. A wide variety of ideas and comments were provided, and this information is summarized in the following report. In order to provide a more coherent summary of this diverse information, the comments have been divided into several categories. The first portion of the document is in summary form, while the raw comments have been attached as a reference in the second section.



# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

## BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, CONNECTIONS & CROSSINGS

*A map of the City's existing and proposed bike & ped facilities was displayed at the open house to help place the McDoel project in context.*



As a major focus of the project, bicycle and pedestrian facilities drew significant input. There was a particular focus on how the trail would be treated at street crossings as well as how it would be connected with other parts of the community. Some felt that the crossings would cause traffic back-ups, and another felt that the trail was unnecessary due to the presence of existing sidewalks to the same destinations. There was much interest in making a trail connection beyond the current proposed northwest terminus to better serve neighborhoods and businesses in that area of the community. In general, people supported making as many connections as possible along the length of the trail, particularly to the established neighborhoods along the corridor. Also, linkages to other parks, public facilities, and even businesses on the west side of State Road 37 were suggested.

Street crossings throughout the trail were identified as a major concern. Proper signs and other warnings for trail users and vehicular traffic were stressed. This issue was listed quite frequently as one of the highest priorities for the design of the project. Participants suggested signs, flashing lights, raised intersections (leaving the “humps” at railroad crossings), and push-button stoplights as possible crossing treatments. In particular, access from and crossing over Country Club Road was seen as a key issue. People felt that traveling along this corridor in its current state was very dangerous, and that trying to cross it will be equally as difficult. Some suggested a bridge or tunnel at Country Club Road.

## NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Environmental issues were an important concern of open house participants. Some felt that there was not much potential for reuse of the area due to the major floodplain presence. Participants were very much in support of cleaning up whatever contamination may be on the site. Cleaning up and naturalizing the Clear Creek stream corridor was mentioned frequently. Several people suggested that the City purchase adjacent properties as needed to gain control over the entire creek corridor, providing the project with the best opportunity for a comprehensive clean-up program. Tree preservation in many portions of the project area was identified as a priority. Some suggested using the stream corridor in Bryan Park as a model for naturalizing the area.



# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

## ON-SITE FACILITIES & USES

One of the most crucial components of the project is identifying potential new uses for the switchyard area. Accordingly, open house attendees made a wide variety of suggestions. A variety of passive and active recreation components were mentioned, including natural green space, a Frisbee golf course, a dog park, an amphitheatre, community gardens, playgrounds, art displays, a limestone block maze, and a skate park.

Reflecting the history of the switchyard was supported as a component of the design. People believed that it would be good to have some elements that represented the railroad heritage of the site. Some felt that a visitor's center with historical items and displays would be beneficial. In addition, some track could be saved and have old train engines and cars displayed. Further, the former roundhouse shape and size should be reflected in any design for that area. Several people suggested reusing train cars as concession stands or picnic shelters.

The Community Bike Project was suggested a number of times as a participant in the project. It was felt that providing them with a facility along the trail would benefit both them and the community. Other bicycle-oriented businesses were also supported. Safety and security were seen as high priorities in the final design of the trail and switchyard. In particular, people wanted the design to minimize opportunities for vandalism and to include adequate lighting to protect trail users at night.



*Citizens consider ideas for redeveloping the McDoel Switchyard.*

## VISION & PRECEDENT PREFERENCES

As stated in the introduction, one element of the open house was an exercise where participants could identify their preferences for uses on the switchyard site by sticking dots on photographic examples. While this was not a scientific study of community preferences, it did provide some insight as to the priorities that people are placing on redevelopment elements. The following list identifies the reuse options shown on the preference display, and the number of dots that each one received.

- Urban trails/Connections to Downtown = 44
- Water Features & Restoration of Clear Creek Stream Corridor = 43



*Participants placed dots around the elements they favored for inclusion in the Switchyard project.*

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

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- Passive Activity Spaces = 32
- Shared-Use Trail = 31
- Mixed-Use Retail/Commercial/Housing = 28
- Environmental Education Facilities = 27
- Green Infrastructure/Stormwater Management Facilities = 25
- Reference Industrial Heritage = 22
- Nature/Recreational Trails Through the Switchyard = 21
- Environmental Art = 19
- Playgrounds = 14
- Separate Trail for Commuters = 14
- Infill Housing = 9
- Community Center = 7
- Athletic Facilities = 3
- Family Aquatic Center = 3

In regard to athletic facilities, people noted that formal athletic fields are not needed, and that they would prefer more passive space instead. Information about several projects from other communities was also displayed for participants. Many people identified the Platte River Corridor project in Denver as a great example for the McDoel project. The display describing a park created from an abandoned industrial center in Germany also attracted much attention. Of particular interest to attendees were the use of green infrastructure, natural methods of treating pollution, and the re-use of some industrial elements.

### ADJACENT LAND USES

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Many suggestions were made for future redevelopment of areas adjacent to the switchyard and rail corridor. In general, people were quite supportive of the City acquiring adjacent parcels that could be used for additional park space or provide enhancements to the Clear Creek corridor. People were interested in creating neighborhood-scaled commercial centers that were oriented to the trail corridor. They also suggested that the City work with existing stores and restaurants along the route to help them re-orient to the trail. Infill housing in appropriate locations was also supported.

Some people suggested closing portions of the Morton Street corridor to create more public spaces along the trail. Another suggested creating a new bus transfer station where the Bloomington Transit headquarters are currently located. Reuse suggestions were also given for some existing warehouses on the west side of the switchyard. Among the suggestions were artist studios, condominiums, apartments, or small scale retail shops. Mixed-use infill development was suggested for adjacent areas which currently have parking lots or no development on them.





## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

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Working with Wonderlab for educational activities was suggested. Also noted was the idea of purchasing buildings on the block between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> street in order to remove them and provide more space for the trail corridor. Improvements to the portion of the Clear Creek channel north of Grimes were also recommended, possibly to include a trail adjacent to it. Some suggested working with the Hospital in some way to help it with parking issues. There was concern about additional parking occurring in surrounding neighborhoods, particularly if no parking is provided on the switchyard site.

### ROAD CONNECTION & TRAFFIC ISSUES

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There were a number of issues raised with respect to existing and future road connections throughout the switchyard and rail corridor. There was concern regarding the lack of efficient east-west traffic routes in Bloomington. Some people felt that the high number of road crossings for the future trail would create a traffic bottleneck, as there are few alternative routes for vehicular traffic. One suggestion offered was to make 3<sup>rd</sup> Street a multi-lane arterial road straight through the City to create a good east-west route. A more general traffic concern was that the termination of rail service would greatly increase truck traffic on local streets, creating congestion and safety problems.

The connection of Hillside Drive drew a lot of attention from participants. Some felt that this connection should not be made, due mainly to the physical constraints of putting a high-traffic road through existing neighborhood areas on either side of the switchyard. Some people suggested alternative routes for Hillside Drive, taking it around the large warehouses to the west of the switchyard and avoiding the neighborhood area. Other new street connections were also suggested. Among them were connecting Miller Drive with Rockport Road, connecting South Drive with Coolidge Drive, and continuing College Avenue south to Country Club Road. Also suggested were a continuation of Morton Street south of Grimes to the new Hillside Drive, and adding a roundabout where the trail crosses Country Club Road.



*A local resident points out a potential route for the Hillside Drive connection through the Switchyard.*

# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

## GENERAL COMMENTS

A wide variety of more general comments were also submitted during the open house. A few participants did not see any immediate need for the project, and felt that the money might be better spent on bringing in new jobs or making bicycle and pedestrian improvements in other parts of the community. Some felt that public investment should be minimized and private investment maximized, while others felt that it was appropriate to invest tax dollars in this project. Benefit concerts and private donations were suggested as ways for paying for future work on the project. It was suggested that new trails were not needed as much as better planning for bicyclists on existing roads.

Volunteerism and citizen involvement were seen as ways to maximize community support as well as reduce project costs. It was suggested that lighting is a problem, not just along the trail, but also in adjacent neighborhoods. Light pollution was also a concern. Some participants were concerned about the potential of a new switchyard on the west side of Bloomington. They were concerned with the current use of the split lines on the west end of the corridor for switching activities, which creates noise and fumes in the neighborhoods nearby.

*Participants were able to register their comments on sheets like the one pictured at right.*

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE McDOEL SWITCHYARD & CSX CORRIDOR?**

PLEASE SHARE ANY OTHER IDEAS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE CREATED IN THE McDOEL SWITCHYARD & CSX CORRIDOR BY WRITING THEM BELOW:

Fenced Dog Park in Railroad yard at Crescent place  
Skate Park  
Official fenced dog park (oh!)  
- SECURITY LIGHTS / PHONES ●  
- FOUNTAIN  
- LOCAL ART (\*COVERS BACKS OF BUILDINGS, ETC) ●  
- Remnants of switchyard history - a little track, convert a couple of boxes into a coffee shop or something. Have photos of old switchyard (improvements) hanging inside.  
- The area around the track <sup>sun</sup> is already pickled with the most noxious chemicals available (debris, acid orange). Excavate the top 18" of soil and remove.  
- Keep vision of switchyard with ideas + pictures.  
- "Rail yard" is used - currently the 2nd story  
- RESEARCH THE HISTORY OF THE McDOEL SWITCHYARD LINK CSX CORRIDOR TRAIL TO OTHER TRAILS (Bike trail, walk, run) to expand recreational opportunities LINK TRAIL SYSTEM TO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OR OTHER DESTINATIONS OUTSIDE OF THE CITY (Crescent and Henderson)  
- Community gardens + bike leasers for commuters  
- Include the Community bike Project in the plan. They need a building, bike etc. to operate from on the new the corridor. Great project. Been around since 1991.  
- Preserve rail & develop adjacent park & docks.

McDOEL SWITCHYARD & CSX CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN  
City of Bloomington Redevelopment Commission  
11 January 2008



INSERT AERIAL LAYOUT HERE

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**INSERT AERIAL LAYOUT HERE**

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# KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY

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In order to provide an opportunity for specific interest groups to provide input directly to the City, a series of Key Group Interviews were conducted over a two day period. During this time, twelve different 30-minute interview sessions occurred, giving a wide variety of stakeholders the chance to address their vision for the switchyard and rail corridor. Staff from Ratio Architects as well as the City Of Bloomington were present at the interviews. What follows is a summary of the input gathered at those interview sessions.

## ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS

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The first adjacent property owners to be interviewed were John Goode, owner of the Indiana Warehouse, and Jim Regester, representing the ownership of the Grimes Warehouse. They felt that establishing road connectivity between Grimes Lane and the Hillside Drive extension was important to the future use of the warehouse buildings. They did not have firm plans for future reuse or redevelopment of those sites, although there is an approved plan for additional parking spaces south of the Indiana Warehouse. They would be interested in getting zoning similar to that of the Thomson PUD Tract E. Overall, the Hillside Drive extension was seen as a high priority which should be expedited.

The next adjacent property owner to be interviewed was Jerry Gates, owner of the Seminary Square shopping center at the corner of 2nd Street and College Avenue. He emphasized the need to focus on job creation and economic development in the community, and didn't want this project to distract from those issues. He suggested that the Kroger Store would like to expand in the future, and his primary interest is adding space to the west (which would conflict with the existing rail right-of-way). He supports the concept of modifying the Kroger store to address the trail, but his primary objective is to get the expansion done. Mr. Gates felt that he could support the project if the City is clear on what it is purchasing, the City supports businesses along the trail, and that job creation remains a priority in the community.

Jim Karl, the owner of the City Grill at 3rd Street and College Avenue, was also invited to an interview session but could not attend.

## COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY

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This organization was represented by Chuck Osborn. He was very interested in making sure that the trail is surfaced with materials that will be accessible for wheelchair bound users. He suggested that audible signals at crossings would be very beneficial for visually impaired users. There should also be convenient places for disabled persons to park their vehicles and access the trail. Finally, facilities such as picnic areas, playgrounds, and pathways need to be accommodate the disabled.



## KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

### DOWNTOWN BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION

The Commission was represented by Talisha Coppock. The Convention Center is considering expanding, and has identified eastward expansion as its primary option. If this occurs, there would be the potential for reconfiguring the end of the building adjacent to the trail to provide access. She encouraged the construction of the portion of the trail running from the Convention Center to the Showers Complex as the first phase. This would help visitors to downtown move around easily, particularly to the many restaurants in the area. Safety is crucial along the trail, so appropriate lighting and bicycle police patrols should be considered. The area west of the railroad is currently envisioned to remain parking, but could potentially be developed for residential uses.

### MONROE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioners were represented by Iris Kiesling and Herb Kilmer. Mr. Kilmer brought Bud Bernitt as a guest. Mr. Kilmer and Mr. Bernitt proposed that the railroad tracks be retained and used for a trolley system that would serve residents and businesses. The system could later be linked via existing rails to the businesses west of State Road 37. In general, the creation of a greenway was seen as a positive step, and safety considerations at intersections were stressed. The County is interested in what happens at the Convention Center, as their employees use the western lots. They also own a sizeable piece of land west of Rogers Street for the Juvenile Detention Center, and they are interested in understanding the implications the project will have for them.

### BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY COMMISSION

The Commission was represented by Mitch Rice. They see the trail as a tremendous opportunity to enhance commuting and recreation in the city. He stressed the need to integrate this trail with the others being developed throughout the community so that system connectivity is maximized. In order for the trail to be utilized, it is crucial that they are safe and clean. They believe that a single, 12 foot wide path (similar to the Clear Creek Trail) would be appropriate within the corridor, as opposed to providing separate paths for recreation and commuting. He does not believe that additional parking should be created within the Switchyard. Rather, people should use existing parking on nearby streets. In addition, the provision of numerous access points should reduce the need for people to drive.

### WONDERLAB

Wonderlab was represented by Catherine Olmer. They plan to convert the area between their new building and the future trail into the "Wonder Gardens" for use as an educational space. They want to control access to the space, and do not want trail users to access it as they would a public park. This is primarily due to concerns about maintenance and vandalism. They see parking in Downtown as a primary concern, particularly since Wonderlab does not have any parking space of its own. They see the trail as a way of potential reducing the parking need for users of their facility. Traffic speed along 4th street is also a concern.

# KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

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## MPO CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The Committee was represented by Jerry Hays. He felt that it was important for properties adjacent to the trail to develop and grow, especially with uses that would provide activities and entertainment for trail users. Apartments, shops, restaurants, bars, bike rentals, and similar uses would be appropriate along the trail. He felt that connections to other parks, trails, and facilities would be even more important than redevelopment of adjacent areas. He said that the Citizens Advisory Committee is supportive of the project, and that it will enhance the quality of life as well as support economic development. He felt that the zoning process may be discouraging to development, and that special zoning for the corridor may help to create a unique character and encourage redevelopment.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

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The Commission was represented by Kelly Boatman. Their highest priority is that the project be environmentally sensitive. They are concerned about the floodplain area and stormwater in general. They suggest using best management practices and to seek opportunities restore the floodplain and the habitat of the stream corridor. The preservation of trees versus the restoration of the floodplain will be a key issue. The Commission's opinion will hinge on weighing the potential benefits of each action for a specific area. They believe that sustainable building practices should be utilized, and that any construction should maintain a 25 foot setback from water resources (per Bloomington Code). They see potential in acquiring the forested lands north of Ninth Street Park. The Commission submitted a list of specific goals and objectives for the project which is incorporated in the Environmental Commission portion of Appendix B.

A member of the Environmental Resources Advisory Committee was invited to a separate interview session, but could not attend.

## MONROE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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The Parks Department was represented by Chuck Stephenson. He is supportive of the project and feels that it will be of great benefit to the community. He thinks that parking should be provided at trailheads. The County owns some former rail corridor south of the project, but he is not certain how much and it is unlikely that the County would build a trail there. He is interested in building the "Flatwood" trail, but there are no firm plans at this time.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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The Commission was represented by Chris Sturbaum. He feels that the trail should be looked upon as an economic development tool because it can attract people and jobs through enhancing Bloomington's quality of life. He is interested in the City acquiring the properties that Clear Creek runs through in order to better manage the corridor. Wayfinding signage would be a good component of the trail in order to identify the various neighborhoods or historic properties that it passes through. In general, he felt that it was important to reference the history of the switchyard and corridor in the final design.

## KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

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### INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGIST

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Bob Bernacki, a local industrial archaeologist, spoke about the historical resources on the switchyard site. He is concerned about the potential loss of the roundhouse foundation and other industrial remnants. He suggested that a detailed study of the site by someone with railroad experience might be appropriate. It would be good to preserve as many artifacts as possible, and it may even be possible to hold on to some train cars and equipment for display purposes. Generally, the roundhouse foundation and historic elements should influence the final design of any facilities placed on the switchyard site.



# APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

## BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, CONNECTIONS & CROSSINGS

- Money should be spent on pedestrian crossings over SR 37 to access businesses on the west side.
- It would be good to at least remove the railroad tracks, but the money would be better spent on building a path out 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to Wal-Mart (on the west side of SR 37).
- Crossings will be a problem – pedestrians will cause traffic backups in areas where there are few east/west routes to choose from.
- Why do we need a trail when there are plenty of good sidewalks to get people to the same destinations?
- Consider extending the trail past Adams Street in the future so that neighborhoods out there are connected too. (1 dot)
- Consider stop/caution lights where the trail crosses heavily trafficked streets (lights where a button could be pushed to cross). (1 dot)
- Try to extend to the west to lower income neighborhoods as their lack of money seems to equal lack of political leverage. Project after project these neighborhoods get left behind. The public is notoriously unhappy about this.
- The project should connect to the area it passes through. Make walking paths out of undeveloped alleys. (1 dot)
- Provide bridge over Country Club Road to connect trail and provide a safe crossing. (1 dot)
- Link the south end of the McDoel Trail with the north end of the Clear Creek Trail to create more complete transport artery on the west side.
- Connect with existing trails & bike routes to form viable bicycle commuting options for northwest and southwest Bloomington.
- Make sure there are safe access points. Country Club Road to the rail trail is unsafe and makes people one block away afraid to walk there. This is a shame.
- Refurbish the 10<sup>th</sup> Street trail to make the surface usable for bikes other than mountain bikes. It's in terrible condition. Then connect it to other trails.
- All trails should be paved so you don't have to have a mountain bike to use them.
- Pedestrian crossings at busy streets are a big concern. (1 dot)
- Create many connections to existing streets.
- Find a way to link Clear Creek Trail & McDoel Trail (Two potential connections drawn on map – one along Country Club/Tapp Roads, one passing through Sudbury/Adams Hill areas). (2 dots on this comment).
- Also a path link drawn in that recommends making a complete circle by connecting the Adams Street terminus around the west side to the north terminus of the Clear Creek Trail.
- Possible trail access on Adams Street.
- Notation shows a need for bicycle and pedestrian connections through the Broadview Neighborhood adjacent to the west side of the switchyard.
- Patterson, Second, Fifth (Kirkwood), and Rogers might be difficult to cross due to automotive traffic. Is there a plan to deal with this?
- Idea for intersections: Have signposts saying the name of the street and what is up the street (i.e. Crazy Horse, etc.). Maybe say how far – "Historical Museum 4 Blocks". This would help residents, tourists, and new people navigate.
- There should be bicycle access along & across Country Club Road to get to the trail.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- We rode trails in the St. Petersburg, Florida, area. At minor road crossings, the roads had stop signs for the trail. At major road crossings, the trail had stop signs or bridges. The trail was clearly marked – 1/3 for pedestrians & 2/3 for bicyclists, rollerbladers, etc.
- The northwestern end of the corridor should link to the big box stores on the west side of Bloomington to aid non-car transit.
- Possible neighborhood connections could be made to the corridor from Maple Street and Cottage Grove Street. (1 dot)
- A trail is drawn in crossing from Ninth Street Park north over the active line to the purchase area and through to Diamond Street. (2 dots)
- This section (west of Rogers Street) can work as transportation because of fewer cross streets. Stopping every block is bad.
- The CSX track west of Adams Street is useful only for switching cars between the Indiana Railroad tracks by the west end of 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park & GE out on Curry Pike. Why not include an option on this track segment as it could take the trail all the way out to Curry Pike. Such an extension would also allow trail-user access to the large west-side commercial/retail area as the track adjoins the Whitehall Crossing shopping area, etc. This would be one of the few instances in which trail users could actually go somewhere (to grocery stores, job commute, movies, etc.) other than a recreation jaunt. (2 dots)
- Be sure to leave lanes for those of us who walk! (3 dots) (“Ditto!”)
- I agree (with statement above) – this should be west crossing of State Road 37 at rail bridge between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. Path should run west along 6<sup>th</sup> to the rail corridor, then west as far as possible along the rail corridor.
- Humps in the road (at current rail crossings)? If you remove the humps, will the traffic look for trail walkers/bikers?
- How do we get to Gates’ shopping center & points west?
- Safe and uninterrupted travel along the route is going to take major planning and a willingness to give some added right of way rights to cyclists.
- It is difficult for pedestrians to cross at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Refuge island? Traffic light? Overpass? Tunnel? (1 dot for Tunnel)
- A possible connection is noted across Walnut Street to Bryan Park and the path on Southdowns Drive. (5 dots)
- Use bridge (behind Herald-Times building) for access to Walnut Street. (2 dots)
- Use stoplights that sense approaching cyclists but are normally red otherwise. This provides continuous travel for cyclists & the least disruption to cars when there is no use of the cycling route.
- There needs to be a connection to Broadview that avoids Tapp Road/Country Club Road and reduces car traffic.
- Several connections from the Switchyard to the Broadview Neighborhood are noted on the photograph.
- Sidewalk along Country Club Road should connect to the trail.
- It is hard to get to the proposed trail corridor from Allendale Drive (further east past Walnut). What sort of link is possible here?
- Add a bike lane and pedestrian walk to Country Club Road for trail access. (1 dot)
- Make a bridge at Country Club Road – run the trail beneath the road like many golf cart paths do at golf courses.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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- Should not throw away money on a floodplain area.
- This is a ridiculous and stupid idea because the whole place will flood.
- The area is a “stacked deck” due to floodplain issues.
- This demands common sense – building in the floodplain is not common sense because people would have to spend more time and money on repairing their property after flooding.
- Preserve and clean up Clear Creek & preserve green corridor.
- Enhance wetlands at South end. (1 dot)
- Use natural plantings like around the stream in Bryan Park – that’s transformed the park! That and the walking trail along Southdowns Drive have created real urban green space for that area. Aim for a similar feel on the pedestrian paths at McDoel. Plant Willows.
- Consider using tough & resilient native/naturalizing wood species: (Cephalantus, Rosa Rugosa & C.V.’s\*, Rhus, Uburnums, Amelanchier, Comptonia, Myrica\*, \* = use in cinder soil horizon, Michael Kaczorowski/hmkaczor@indiana.edu)
- The area around the train track is surely pickled with the most noxious chemicals available (herbicides, agent orange). Excavate the top 18" of soil and remove.
- Preserve trees in the area north of West Ninth Street Park.
- The entire creek corridor should, at least eventually, be acquired. Restoration can be a many-year project with involvement by local & state environmental groups and volunteer labor (such as the Sycamore Land Trust).
- Clean up the brush that now clogs this historic WPA storm water open ditch. (1 dot)
- Preserve trees & woods-like feeling here (east of creek/north of Hillside). (1 dot)
- Engineer Clear Creek so that it has ponds and waterfalls. Germany does this.

### ON-SITE FACILITIES & USES

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- The only thing that makes sense in this area is an industrial park.
- Perhaps the rail line could be preserved and still used to serve businesses, while also allowing pedestrian use.
- Industrial archaeology needs to be a component of the master plan process. There is not a lot to work with at the site in terms of remaining structures or facilities, but care should be taken not to destroy anything of significance that is still there.
- The City should obtain any historic photos or documents related to the property before the purchase is finalized. For example, such items were secured from U.S. Steel and IU has placed a photo database on the web.
- Historic resources should greatly influence the design. It would be good to build off of the pattern of the original roundhouse.
- Resources are available to do a thorough search of the site for artifacts, including technology that can detect underground items.
- Some facilities & equipment can be saved and used somehow, such as the roundhouse foundations, former treatment facilities, bridges, and train tracks/cars. It would be good to have a display of train equipment, and this should be delivered before the track is removed.

## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Limestone quarry parks are needed to celebrate the community's limestone heritage.
- A Frisbee golf course should be considered for the switchyard area – it would be cheap and easy to construct.
- Put parking at the south end so people who work downtown can easily get 15-30 minutes of walking per day. (1 dot)
- Reference historic properties – Possibly move in old (frame) gas station or R building for use w/in the trail. (1 dot)
- Utilize old sewage treatment facility for playground.
- Create a railroad museum.
- Design so as to minimize opportunities for vandalism. (2 dots)
- Reflect the community's limestone heritage. (1 dot)
- Create a limestone block maze. (1 dot)
- Use limestone to define perimeters, dividers, etc.
- Create some sort of walking maze, potentially in the low area at 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park.
- Create “art-happening” places: stop-offs where small performances can take place along the trail.
- The project needs lots of art & color. (1 dot)
- Use boxcars & rails in the design for such things as concession stands, etc.
- Include the Community Bicycle Project in this plan. Find a structure along the trail for this successful project to operate. This project can offer bicycle safety instruction, low cost bikes, activities for children & families, etc. This project has existed in Bloomington since 1997.
- Lights are important. Also a visitor's center regarding rail history.
- Create an amphitheater for outdoor concerts or plays. (1 dot)
- Don't create new parking lots – we have plenty already. Use existing streets, etc.
- Retain the rail infrastructure for future use such as personal transport & shopping (this shows progressive foresight for the end of petrol based transport).
- Make a fenced dog park in the railyard part of the greenspace.
- Make a skate park.
- Include security lights and phones. (1 dot)
- Include a fountain.
- Incorporate local art (such as murals covering the backs of buildings, etc.). (1 dot)
- Utilize remnants of switchyard history – a little track, convert a couple of boxcars into a coffee shop or something, have photos of old switchyard & roundhouse hanging inside.
- Keep the vision of the switchyard with relics & pictures. A dog park is needed. Charge a monthly access fee like Indianapolis does.
- Create community gardens and bike lockers for commuters.
- Include the community bike project in the plan. They need a building or boxcar to operate from on or near the corridor. It's a great project – been around since 1997.
- Retain the rail and develop adjacent paths & parks.
- Please consider including the Community Bike Project into the corridor master plan. The Bike Project needs a new location & this project would be ideal. The project is financially self-sustaining by selling bikes. It is also a great help by providing low cost bike to the community, bike safety classes, and helping people earn a bike. The project can also make bike racks, sculpture, or benches from old bike frames and bike parts. Call Gina @ 332-9870 for more info. (See brochure).

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Please also consider including a space for teens to do their BMX & trick riding, such as a skate park.
- If the Cascades Skate Park is successful, a similar facility could go in down here.
- Duisburg-Nord Park in Germany is an excellent model. Re-create/reuse rail & limestone industry features – they are the history of Bloomington and should not be erased. Use plants to correct environmental issues! We can always learn from some of Germany's environmental successes. This model sums up a lot of my vision and what seems to be a general community vision.
- The roundhouse could be recreated and used as a public building/space, even if it were a "ruin". It could include picnic space, restrooms, and historical exhibits.
- A "Crestmont Community Center" is drawn in the forested area between the tracks north of Ninth Street Park.
- For the long warehouse just south of Grimes, suggested uses are: 80 art studios, condominiums & community businesses, skate park, ice skating rink, or other activity area for young people.
- Make this (Indiana Warehouse) a shopping center/retail.
- A south City Square could be placed in the vicinity of the former Roundhouse.
- Use most of the floodplain as park land. Use some of the higher land as affordable housing land & lease some to private use, including commercial. (3 dots)
- Create mixed-use infill between downtown square and south city square. The South Square could function as a connection between McDoel Gardens, Broadview, Bryan Park and other neighborhoods.

### VISION & PRECEDENT PREFERENCES

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#### *What is your vision for the McDoel Switchyard & the CSX Corridor?*

- Infill Housing = 9 dots ("No!", "This is okay, but mixed use is a better idea.")
- Mixed-Use Retail/Commercial/Housing = 28 dots
- Reference Industrial Heritage = 22 dots
- Green Infrastructure/Stormwater Management Facilities = 25 dots
- Family Aquatic Center = 3 dots
- Passive Activity Spaces = 32 dots
- Urban Trails/Connections to Downtown = 44 dots
- Shared-Use Trail = 31 dots
- Separate Trail for Commuters = 14 dots
- Nature/Recreational Trails Through the Switchyard = 21 dots
- Water Features & Restoration of Clear Creek Stream Corridor = 43 dots
- Environmental Art = 19 dots
- Playgrounds = 14 dots
- Environmental Education Facilities = 27 dots
- Community Center = 7 dots
- Athletic Facilities = 3 dots ("Pick-up sports, not formalize sports so that the land usage is limited." / "I think Bloomington has plenty of land for official sports. Lets have 'resting' land – passive space & TREES.")

## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### *Project Precedents*

- Denver/Platte River (10 dots) [“Denver has stoplights where trail crosses busy streets, even if not at an intersection with other roads.”]
- Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord (3 dots) [Re-use of functional industrial elements photo = 3 dots, Green infrastructure photo = 3 dots, Phytoremediation technology photo = 4 dots, Remnant pieces transformed into art pieces = 1 dot]
- No dots/comments on other three precedents that were displayed.

### ADJACENT LAND USES

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- It is crucial to seek opportunities to purchase and incorporate key adjacent parcels to enhance the overall design of the project.
- Parts of Morton Street could be closed and made into greenspace or public plazas. Most of the residences along Morton Street are accessed via rear alleys due to the steep grade change between Morton Street and the homes.
- Consider purchasing adjacent parcels at the north and south ends so that forest and creek areas can be incorporated.
- Work with the hospital and Jerry Gates to connect the hospital and surrounding neighborhood with Seminary Park, reconfigure Kroger as a neighborhood retail center. (1 dot)
- Buy nearby land currently outside project boundaries & add to the acreage of the park/project.
- Extend east boundary at south end to include creek & greenspace. Create an environmental park along creek.
- Develop more small retail so that local persons can afford to open businesses.
- Don't use existing streets for parking – many neighborhoods have little off-street parking for residents. Possibly use area south off of Grimes for parking, and landscape the lots.
- Create bicycle boulevard streets.
- Preserve the history of the McDoel Switchyard. Link the CSX corridor trail to other trails (Rail Trail, Clear Creek) to expand recreational opportunities. Link the trail system to recreational opportunity or other destinations outside the city (Fairfax, Hoosier National Forest, Harrodsburg).
- Right now, the view from the tracks is the back of many buildings, dumpsters, etc. Are there ways to make it more scenic? Could there be help from business owners?
- Northwest end of the trail – is the City going to take control of those woods between Ninth Street Park and the railroad tracks? There is a trail that a lot of people use that needs to be maintained.
- The wooded area between the tracks should be optioned before Phase 1 of the project is completed/ planned. Elimination of railroad traffic on the north side of the tract will radically increase the land value of the wooded tract, making it unaffordable to the City later. This tract is probably the largest wooded tract in the old city area outside of Indiana University. (12 dots)
- The city should use eminent domain on the wooded tract to avoid speculation.
- At 6<sup>th</sup> Street, acquire buildings to allow safe passage of both pedestrian traffic and a trolley (bus) to use corridor as a means of providing pathway in from outlying parking areas.
- Partner with Wonderlab on outdoor educational elements of trail. (2 dots) (“Yes!”)
- Connection with the hospital is an opportunity. Hospital employee parking could be placed at the Switchyard.
- Noted on the Kroger Grocery Store: Put storefront on the trail side too.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Purchase this property (vacant parcel south of Dodds Street) for neighborhood amenities/playground (Victor Oolitic is current owner). Also suggested for this property were a neighborhood community center and a dog park.
- Could parts of Morton Street itself be closed – i.e. between 1<sup>st</sup> & Grimes? Or from the Convention Center to Grimes? Residential properties currently do not access their homes from the street, but from the alley on the west side of their properties. Commercial enterprises on cross-roads could access off of the cross-roads (corners).
- Can the canal (channelized portion of Clear Creek north of Grimes) be figured into this plan somehow? Its an existing greenway & needs some TLC. Evidently neither the Utilities Department nor Public Works Department keeps it repaired. It would be an excellent walkway. (2 dots)
- At the Bloomington Transit offices, a note suggests a bus transfer station & trail pick-up.
- 1.5 acres is for sale adjacent to the study area (Pam H. 334-0090). It overlooks the creek, its flat, and could provide parking for the trail.
- Buy both sides of the creek corridor. Try to purchase as much of the wooded area as possible. (4 dots)
- Try to purchase more portions of the creek corridor at the south end of the Switchyard. This is floodplain land and could be used for natural parkland. (5 dots)
- Request that businesses donate the adjacent land for tax benefits?

### ROAD CONNECTION & TRAFFIC ISSUES

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- When the tracks are removed, that will mean more truck traffic on the surrounding roads to serve businesses.
- Maybe 3<sup>rd</sup> Street should be made an arterial directly through town so that there is a good east/west route for people to use.
- This project will only cause a traffic bottleneck, and the money should be spent on improving the existing road system.
- The City needs to deal with east-west traffic corridors because there are not a lot of good routes for traffic right now.
- Make sure the east/west corridor is completed for vehicular movements.
- Opposed to the reopening of Hillside Avenue from Walnut Street west to Rogers Street. Hillside is currently narrow and to support a roadway through would disturb too many properties.
- Several east-west/north-south connections were written in for roads through the Switchyard: Connect Miller Drive with Rockport Road (E-W), Connect South Drive with Coolidge Drive (E-W), Continue College Avenue down to Tapp Road (N-S).
- Hillside Drive must not connect through the 300-400 blocks. It must connect just to the south of Zucchini Prints.
- Traffic can flow through the area more smoothly if a boulevard runs from Patterson Drive and West Allen Street along the old railroad spur behind where Thomson Plant #1 used to be, across Rogers, down to Country Club Drive. This would tie together the streets that will be reconnected across the railyard – Hillside, Miller, North Drive, etc.
- Noted at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street: There are no east-west roads to cross to State Road 37. The Parris-Dunning House blocks 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from going directly through to the west side.
- An alternative Hillside Drive route is drawn in, suggesting that it turn south and run along the north side of the Indiana Warehouse as opposed to directly west to the other stub of Hillside.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Hillside should run south of Zucchini Prints on Rogers Street and then across to Adams Street (see rail spur across Rogers Street). (2 dots)
- Run Hillside north to Grimes/Patterson along old rail bed. No homes would be impacted, but it would go through the trail area. A divider would be needed, perhaps tunnels for the trail, etc. (1 dot)
- Extend Morton Street south to West Hillside Drive.
- Connect Miller Drive through the Switchyard from Walnut Street to the street network within the trailer park at Rogers & Rockport. (1 dot)
- Make a boulevard road running north south from Country Club to Patterson/Allen.
- Put a roundabout in where the trail crosses Country Club Road. (1 dot)
- The whole corridor of Country Club Road between Rogers and Walnut is very dangerous to walk along or try to cross.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

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- This project is more time and effort than it is worth.
- There is not an immediate need for this project – tax money would be better spent on bringing in jobs or making businesses more accessible to pedestrians.
- It would be easier and cheaper to make other improvements in the City.
- This is not a wise use of tax money
- How many people will really use this? We need to balance this against the amount of money that is being spent on it (the money is disproportional to the use).
- Need to think about who this is really serving (location/income level).
- Pedestrians aren't paying taxes for this, so driver's money shouldn't be used.
- There is not a true public need for this if only a very small percentage of the population will use it.
- Minimize expenses from tax revenue and maximize private investment in the project, including ongoing maintenance costs. (4 dots)
- Anything is better than the present condition. (1 dot)
- Please consider the huge resource of volunteerism.
- This is needed infrastructure for the City. Use tax dollars! That's what they are for. (1 dot)
- Get commercial companies to invest privately and allow them to reap PR/marketing benefits. Taxpayers will buy in to project more if they are not forced to pay for it. (3 dots)
- Bicycle transportation does not need more trails & pavement as much as we need planning with bicycles in mind with our existing streets.
- Bicycle transportation has a limited connection to Parks & Recreation – it's Public Works & Transportation.
- Additional funding should be sought through donations, sponsorships, benefit concerts, etc. (1 dot)
- Establish citizen committees for plantings, trail maintenance, etc.
- Make the bicycle transportation planner equal in power to a car planner.
- Create a second universe for bicycle transportation that works separate, but with the car universe.
- Make sure a new switchyard does not move to this location (NW portion of study area)
- This appears to be a rare opportunity to create something positive & permanent from a negative situation. Public input is invaluable & necessary. Final plans & cost controls must be integrated to maximize value.

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## APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- Thanks for doing the trail!
- Bill Cook owns the rail from Curry Pike to Spenser. He plans to make this an alternative transportation corridor. ("Good idea!")
- In areas needing lighting for safety, please use downward facing lights, not lights that contribute to ruining our view of the night sky – in fact we need a city ordinance to protect against further degradation of the night sky. (5 dots)
- The circled section of track (middle spur heading to Adams Street) is a connector between the old L & N (which is being purchased for the trail) and the Indiana Railroad. Coal trains going between strip pits near Bloomfield/Linton stop at this connector on trips to & from Indianapolis Power & Light, and to switch cars to & from General Electric. Without a new far-west-side switchyard, the McDoel Switchyard function is effectively moved adjacent to 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park & west-side residential neighborhoods. This has already happened in the past 2 years since the trail was proposed. Residents are often bothered for hours in the middle of the night by prolonged diesel smoke & rumbling during such switching. (5 dots)
- What is the cost in dollars & existing property for relocated railroad?
- More/better streetlights are needed in the Joy/Jed Street area.
- Asphalt absorbs shocks and is much better for joggers than concrete.

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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS

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### ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS

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*John Goode & Jim Regester*

- 200 parking spaces have been approved by the BZA & DNR south of large warehouse (Indiana Warehouse).
- There is no certainty about buildings that may stay or be removed.
- Connectivity across Hillside is important.
- Parking requirements at the Indiana Warehouse have been relaxed as part of the Thomson PUD approval.
- John has zoning approval for light industrial uses.
- Regester is interested in vehicular access on the east side of the Grimes warehouse to encourage new uses in the existing building.
- Would like to encourage Hillside to connect with Grimes across the front of the long building.
- They would like the zoning to be like Thompson PUD tract “E”.
- John is interested in cooperating with regard to a sanitary sewer easement.
- Please expedite the Hillside Drive connection.

*Jerry Gates - Owner of Seminary Square shopping center*

- He questions the ownership of the rail corridor – he does not believe that CSX actually has the ability to sell the corridor.
- He is concerned that this project is distracting public attention and public dollars from job creation and economic development.
- He wants to expand the Kroger store, and may want to expand to the west onto the rail corridor once it is abandoned.
- He favors the project and the intention of the City to provide recreation opportunities.
- He supports the option of modifying Kroger to serve people using the trail, but his primary objective is to expand the store to the west. Kroger wants to add product lines to the local store.
- He is for the project, so long as it does not reduce the city’s ability to attract new jobs – jobs should be the first priority.
- He wants to be sure that the city looks at all the possible bad scenarios before taking action on the trail. He is concerned that this project represents a pie in the sky vision and will not really solve all the problems it is intended to.
- The clean up of the switchyard will improve the image of the area and will encourage development.
- He supports the project if ... (1) the City is certain about what is purchasing, (2) the City supports businesses and property owners along the trail (including Kroger), and (3) job creation remains the priority.
- He wants to “work with the citizenry” on the project.

*Jim Karl - Owner of City Grill (Did not attend)*

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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY

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*Chuck Osborn*

- He encourages pavement to accommodate wheelchair-bound users.
- He wants an alternate route for wheel-chair bound users for people using scooters and wheelchairs.
- Intersections will be very critical for disabled users.
- Places for disabled users to park and conveniently access the trail are important
- Audible traffic signals may be needed to assist visually impaired users (note: visually impaired users are perceived to typically use these types of facilities with those who can see).
- Refuges for users to protect them from vehicle traffic may be needed at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (once 2<sup>nd</sup> is expanded to 4 lanes – this is in design now).
- Benches, picnic areas, playgrounds, etc. need to accommodate the disabled.

### DOWNTOWN BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION

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*Talisha Coppock*

- The railroad separates the Convention Center and hotel from the parking area – the crossing of vehicles of the trail will be necessary and should be properly signed.
- If the Convention Center is to expand, expansion to the east is prioritized.
- The rail side of the Convention Center is boiler/mechanical space and loading area – renovation on the south side of the west end of the building is possible.
- The land west of the trail is envisioned almost exclusively for parking.
- She encourages the consideration of trail construction from the Convention Center to the Showers complex as a priority – patrons frequently ask about possible activities, things to do, and how to get there.
- The area along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street has graffiti, homeless people, etc. – it needs a focus and regular care – more activity along the trail and in the area would help.
- She doubts that retail would be successful on this western block – apartments may be better. The Convention Center is willing to consider selling the parking lot for development and focus funds elsewhere. Any discussion about modifications to the Convention Center facilities have to fully address their long term needs.
- The City Grill wants to renovate to address trail.
- Kroger owner Jerry Gates has discussed an addition to the building.
- Safety is important – we want to encourage hotel guests (117 rooms) to walk to downtown restaurants – lighting is important.
- A “bark park” would be helpful.
- Bike police patrol along the trail is a good idea.

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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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*Iris Kiesling & Herb Kilmer*  
*Citizen Guest – Bud Bernitt*

- They are concerned about ownership of the trail – do parts of it revert to adjacent owners?
- Perhaps the rail should be left in and used for a trolley with a trail adjacent to the retained rail.
- It may be good to add someone from the County to the steering committee – perhaps from the Planning or Highway Departments?
- Would this be a good route for direct service for mass transit – jitney service, bus serve, trolley service, etc.? This could link to west side shopping and other significant areas of the City.
- Park & Ride locations may be an important element of the project.
- A greenway would be a positive.
- Proper signage at intersections is important.
- County employees park at the Convention Center (west) lot. They also use this area to store county vehicles. The County owns this property and lets the Convention Center use it.
- The County owns property south of Country Club that is in the floodplain and may be a good location for a park in association with park development at the former switchyard. This property may also be needed for Rule 13 considerations (regional detention and filtering). City-County collaboration is needed.
- The County owns 85 acres west of Rogers Street for Juvenile detention, possibly also a records facility. Are there any special considerations?
- Bud Bernitt provided a brief presentation advocating the retention of the rail lines and the operation of a trolley system with a path. He was concerned that once the rails are gone they will be lost permanently. The trolley system would allow rails to be retained and allow access to businesses.
- Herb is concerned about the loss of the rails
- Herb wants to see the rail system retained and linked to the hotels at State Road 37.

### BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY COMMISSION

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*Mitch Rice*

- He sees the trail as a tremendous opportunity for bicycle and pedestrian commuting and recreation. They are both very important and would both be greatly benefited by this trail corridor through the City.
- For people to bike and walk trails they need to be safe and clean.
- The trail should link to Rockport Road, which is rated as the #8 outdoor experience in the U.S. by a bicycling magazine.
- The County needs to work in conjunction with this project for public health benefits.
- The City needs to make sure this has a strong relationship to the 3-4 spokes of trail that lead out into the County – the County's roads are well known as outdoor recreation routes.
- The project needs to provide recreation opportunities for people in their neighborhoods.
- The trail needs to be attractive and serviceable (able to be well-maintained – don't do it if it can't be maintained).
- The railroad tracks are already a pedestrian corridor from the near west side to downtown – it's the easiest, most direct route. Building a true connection from the west side is a significant positive.



## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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- He is not concerned about possible conflicts between pedestrians and bikes. Build the path to an acceptable width and stripe it for bicyclists and pedestrians if there is a problem. Sign the trail appropriately – “bikes slow down”, “be polite”, etc. – this is the first step.
- There will need to be bike police on the trail.
- He thinks that the trail users will be more neighborhood residents, families, etc., and less so students – it is too far away from IU.
- The connection to downtown from neighborhoods is the most important aspect, the 2<sup>nd</sup> important aspect is linking to other trails.
- A 12' wide “Clear Creek Trail” model is generally supported for the minimization of user conflicts.
- He does not believe that a parking lot is needed at the switchyard. This can be a good park for neighborhood people, but it is likely not big enough to bring in outside people. He would be concerned that a parking lot would not be used as a trailhead, but instead as a meeting place and vehicle storage place. There are plenty of places to park along the trail, and it should serve the neighborhoods primarily.

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### WONDERLAB

*Catherine Olmer*

- The area east of the building will be converted to the “Wonder Gardens” – plans have been created and the plant list is being revised.
- Outdoor spaces will be used for programming – it will include benches, will be re-graded to create changes up to 3', and will include a waterfall.
- They want to control access to the space – they do not want trail users thinking that the space is a public park or randomly entering the area. They will use plant material to signal the privacy of the space. They have no objection to fencing, but the currently can't afford it. They are concerned about maintenance and preventing after-hours vandalism. More residents downtown and the users on the trail will help to prevent vandalism.
- They are uncertain as to how to provide enclosure for the north side of the property (the adjacent area is owned by Cook Group). Cook's future plans are uncertain and screening may be needed.
- There are currently a lot of people walking the rail corridor.
- They are concerned about parking in the downtown area – she sees the convention center parking (the county-owned area) as a possible resource. The Wonderlab has no parking area – patrons are on their own to find spaces. People with strollers do not want to use the 4<sup>th</sup> Street garage because there is no elevator and the non-reserved parking is on top (this is not stroller friendly).
- The average length of visits is 3 hours. The cost is about \$6 per person for non-members.
- Traffic in the area is also a problem, particularly its speed.
- The trail would be very beneficial – it might resolve some of the parking problem.
- Pedestrian routes to the Wonderlab need to be pleasant and safe. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Street overpass is an issue – the graffiti, etc., needs to be cleaned up.
- What is the future of Vectren offices? No customers visit that building.
- Would a bus/shuttle service work for the downtown? A trolley is an interesting idea. A trolley and a trail would be great if feasible – but the trail would be preferred.



## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### MPO CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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*Jerry Hays*

- A trolley is an interesting idea, but it may or may not be practical.
- Allow & encourage adjoining properties to redevelop and grow – to provide activities & entertainment for those out for a leisurely stroll.
- There should be “comfort stations” and businesses – shops, restaurants, bars, bike rental, etc. along the trail.
- Connections to other parks, etc., are less important than the redevelopment of the corridor.
- The creation of small clusters of comfort and entertainment businesses along the route would be desirable.
- The Citizens Advisory Committee has no preconceived notions about the project – they are very supportive.
- This project will add to the uniqueness of Bloomington, will enhance the quality of life, and will contribute significantly to economic development.
- The zoning process seems to discourage development. Perhaps some special zoning district could be created for the corridor to set unique standards, encourage new development, and support re-development.
- Apartments along the trail would be a positive – good for security in the area.
- The existing warehouse buildings could be used for apartments or indoor recreation.

### ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

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*Kelly Boatman*

- The Commission's over-riding comment is that a major project goal should be environmental sensitivity.
- Sustainable design should be a goal.
- The floodplain area is a concern.
- Best management practices for storm water run-off should be used. Look for opportunities to improve existing run-off, restore the floodplain, and reforest certain areas.
- Restoring the habitat of the stream corridor could be a focus of the project.
- Some portion of the stream could be adopted by an adjacent neighborhood, or perhaps the high school – a link to the high school would be very important, with environmental education, etc.
- Restoring the floodplain vs. removing trees – the Environmental Commission would make a decision about this based on the quality of the trees in the area and the potential benefit derived from a floodplain restoration.
- Use existing natural features in the design.
- Maintain a 25' setback from the water resources – this is currently required by ordinance in Bloomington.
- There are good acquisition possibilities in the area of 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park – between the rail lines.

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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### *Memo submitted by Environmental Commission: Promote Environmentally Sensitive Development*

- Retain/utilize the existing natural features in the design. Where features cannot be retained, mitigate/replace elsewhere on site.
- Restore natural features where possible.
- Protect water resources (creeks and wetlands) with a minimum of 25' natural vegetated buffer.
- Take advantage of opportunities to reforest and restore the floodplain to the maximum extent possible.
- Demonstrate and utilize “green” products in trail construction and accessory improvements (Trex, solar lighting, non-toxic materials, etc.).
- Due to proximity to creek and floodplain, use best management practices to reduce storm water runoff and protect creek water quality (permeable pavers, biofiltration, green rooftops, etc.).
- Utilize native species in landscape plantings (no exotics).
- Identify and pursue opportunities for greenspace acquisition adjacent to the trail (north end @ 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park, South end near Country Club, confluence of east and west branches of the creek).
- Promote “green” building/sustainable design concepts and incentives for “green” businesses for areas to be redeveloped along the trail.
- Address areas of contamination – consider phytoremediation where appropriate.
- Be aware of the quality (or lack thereof) of Clear Creek and its branches and design visitor contact with creek accordingly. Clear Creek and the West Branch of Clear Creek are listed as “impaired waterbodies” by the State of Indiana.
- Follow the GPP Nurture Environmental Integrity section, especially NEI-4 and NEI-5.

### MONROE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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#### *Chuck Stephenson*

- The Limestone Trail corridor from Country Club Road to Church Lane is generally owned by the County (“the County owns more than they don’t own”).
- Ownership by the County of the area south of Country Club Road has not been discussed – does the Parks Department own it, or do the Commissioners own it?
- The County will likely not build a trail south of Country Club Road – they are most likely building the “Flatwood” trail. The Parks Board wants to build the Flatwood trail, but they do not have the full support of County government as yet.
- He is very supportive of the CSX trail/switchyard project – it is a very brilliant and positive project for the community.
- More parking in general is needed at the trailheads.
- Chuck will do some research on the ownership of the Limestone Trail corridor area.

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

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### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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*Chris Sturbaum*

- The trail should be looked at as an economic development tool – it will attract people and jobs to the community by improving quality of life.
- He hopes that an agreement can be reached with the property owners to the east of the switchyard that would bring the creek into community hands and help relieve the business owners of the liability and “useless” land.
- He would like to see signs identifying historic districts, neighborhoods, etc., that the trail passes through.
- He sees the property as a possible new location for historic buildings elsewhere in the community that need to be relocated – they could be used as restrooms, other service buildings, etc.
- He would like to see a reference to past, historic limestone industry included in the area – possibly by including historic machinery, giant limestone blocks, etc. An old switch engine, rail car, etc., should also be included.

### INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGIST

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*Bob Bernacki*

- He is concerned about the roundhouse foundations and other remnants of the area’s industrial past.
- He would like to see a professional study of the artifacts found in the area – anything that is over 50 years old. The sense of the place should be preserved.
- The scale of the former rail operation is important - it should be preserved as a concept that the roundhouse was huge.
- He would like to see someone with railroad expertise review the historic inventory.
- Judgment calls will need to be made regarding artifacts that may be found on the site – these should be reviewed with the benefit of expertise.
- The site is not significant beyond Bloomington.
- He encourages all above ground artifacts to be saved.
- The railroad may fight to save items that they think are serviceable – it may help to get local, knowledgeable volunteers to help identify serviceable materials that CSX should keep, and unserviceable artifacts that should be left on-site.
- Should include rail cars, engines, and other symbols of transportation history in the project.
- Historic priorities should be the roundhouse, the former wastewater treatment plant, and some form of rolling stock of train cars, etc.

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## APPENDIX C: CITIZENS STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

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Minutes of the Citizens Steering Committee meetings will be inserted here at a later time.

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